

Message Text

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ACTION SCA-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SS-20 VOE-00 SY-03 ABF-01 PER-05

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0126

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 1259

FOR: PER/PCE/PPM, ARA/EX, & SCA/VO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, APER

SUBJECT: NONIMMIGRANT VISA ISSUANCE PROCESS

REF: STATE 021246

1. EMBTEL 944 OF MARCH 6, 1974 DESCRIBED THE PROBLEMS BEING EXPERIENCED IN THE CONSULAR SECTION BECAUSE OF INCREASING BACKLOGS IN CLERICAL WORK AND REQUESTED AUTHORIZATION TO HIRE ONE ADDITIONAL LOCAL EMPLOYEE. EMBASSY HAS NOW RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDED THAT ONE ADDITIONAL JUNIOR OFFICER POSITION ALSO NEEDED IF STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES ARE TO BE MET.

2. DESPITE ADHERENCE TO MAJORITY OF GUIDELINES DESCRIBED IN REFTEL (VISA-BY-MAIL NOT PRACTICABLE HERE) RAPIDLY INCREASING DEMANDS FOR NONIMMIGRANT VISA SERVICES OUTSTRIPPING CAPABILITIES FOR HANDLING THEM. NIV APPLICATIONS IN CALENDAR YEAR 1973 EXCEEDED THOSE IN 1972 BY 27 PERCENT AND DURING FIRST TWO MONTHS OF 1974 VOLUME UP 50 PERCENT OVER SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR. THUS, CURRENT MONTHLY DEMAND APPROACHING PEAK PERIOD (JULY - SEPTEMBER) DEMAND OF TWO YEARS AGO. WE SEE TWO PROBABLE REASONS FOR THIS INCREASE:

A. CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT IN DOMINICAN ECONOMIC SITUATION PROVIDING THE WHEREWITHAL TO AN INCREASING NUMBER OF DOMINICANS FOR TRAVEL ABROAD, PARTICULARLY TO THE NEIGHBORING ISLAND OF
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PUERTO RICO.

B. THE SUCCESS OF OUR INVESTIGATIVE PROGRAM. AS THE EFFICIENCY OF OUR ENDEAVORS IN THIS AREA HAS BECOME COMMON KNOWLEDGE, MORE DOMINICANS DESIRING TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT NOW TRY THE NONIMMIGRANT VISA ROUTE RATHER THAN CHANCE A FRAUDULENT IMMIGRANT VISA APPLICATION.

3. NO CHANGE IS FORESEEN IN EITHER OF THESE FACTORS AND IT IS EXPECTED THAT DEMAND FOR NIV SERVICES WILL CONTINUE TO RISE.

4. DURING PEAK PERIOD LAST YEAR NIV APPLICANTS SO NUMEROUS IT WAS FREQUENTLY NECESSARY TO CLOSE NIV WAITING LINE BEFORE CONSULATE OFFICIALLY OPENED FOR BUSINESS. ON THOSE DAYS AN ESTIMATED 100 - 200 WOULD-BE APPLICANTS WERE UNABLE EVEN TO SEE A CONSULAR OFFICER. THIS SITUATION NO LONGER LIMITED TO PEAK PERIOD MONTHS AS NIV LINE HAS HAD TO BE CLOSED MID-MORNING ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS DURING PAST MONTHS WHICH HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED SLACK PERIOD. WE ARE THEREFORE RUNNING THE RISK OF SERIOUS PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEMS IF THIS SITUATION IS PERMITTED TO CONTINUE UNABATED.

5. IMMIGRANT VISA ISSUANCES AND REFUSALS CONTINUE AT SAME HIGH LEVEL WITH RECENTLY REACTIVATED SCHEDULE C CASES ADDING AN EXTRA BURDEN TO THE ALREADY OVERWORKED IV OFFICERS BECAUSE OF HIGH INCIDENCE OF FRAUD IN THIS CATEGORY OF APPLICANTS. WORK-LOAD OF PASSPORT/CITIZENSHIP -- SPECIAL CONSULAR SERVICES OFFICER ALSO ON INCREASE PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO NOTARIAL SERVICES PERFORMED IN CONNECTION WITH "QUICKIE DIVORCES", UP 35 PERCENT IN 1973 OVER 1972.

6. WITH ALL FUNCTIONS TAXED TO THE EXTREME, THE ABSENCE FROM THE OFFICE OF ANY OFFICER ON LEAVE R&R OR OFFICIAL BUSINESS EXACERBATES THE SITUATION AND MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET DEMAND FOR ALL CONSULAR SERVICES. AS IV APPLICANTS ARE REGULARLY SCHEDULED AND MUST BE PROCESSED WHEN THEIR QUALIFICATION DATES ARE REACHED AND BECAUSE THE SERVICES PERFORMED BY THE PASSPORT/CITIZENSHIP -- SPECIAL CONSULAR SERVICES OFFICER ARE NOT OF A NATURE TO BE POSTPONED OR DELAYED, IT IS THE NIV APPLICANT WHO MUST SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR SHORTAGE OF PERSONNEL.

7. AS THE EMBASSY IS IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT WITH THE SENTIMENTS
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EXPRESSED IN PARAGRAPH 2A OF REFTEL IT IS REQUESTED THAT ONE ADDITIONAL JUNIOR OFFICER BE ASSIGNED TO THE EMBASSY'S CONSULAR SECTION NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 1974 IN ORDER THAT WE MAY PROPERLY COPE WITH THIS KEY STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY.
HURWITCH

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